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WAR IN EUROPEAN HISTORY...  
IS IT REALLY OVER?

GLEN SHAFFER  
LT COL, USAF

Committee 1, 51740

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INTRODUCTION

The recent dramatic changes in Europe have outstripped our ability to clearly perceive what to expect in the future. Experts see the same events and conjure the broadest spectrum of predictions. There are those who foresee a potential Soviet backlash to Stalinism and therefore advocate continued containment strategies. There are also those who feel today's mood of amiability will last forever and are ready to cashier the defense budget for a peace dividend. Both sides can cite historical examples. Both sides also use the same threat factors (capabilities, intentions, vulnerabilities). But both sides are selective in what history they cite and they differ in how the threat formula should be applied. All this makes a big difference in how the past and the present are used to predict the future.

Unfortunately, the analytical perspectives for both sides are usually dictated by what they want to see- or are accustomed to seeing- and what responsibilities they have to the nation. In reality, a clearer view is necessary. This paper will outline a broad perspective of present "changes" in European history and how these might be used to assess their impact on the future. The paper will then suggest an equally broad military strategy.

Most importantly, it will argue that in times of uncertainty we need to adopt Neustadt and May's concept of thinking in "time as a stream", accept uncertainty, and build strategies accounting for uncertainty by offering time-phased incremental changes.

## HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

### Time Streams

Neustadt and May conclude their book Thinking In Time by advocating a thought process that perceives time as a stream. They summarize the process' key factors in this way:

"Thinking of time in such a way appears from our examples to have three components. One is recognition that the future has no place to come from but the past, hence the past has predictive value. Another element is recognition that what matters for the future in the present is departures from the past, alterations, changes, which prospectively or actually divert familiar flows from accustomed channels, thus affecting that predictive value and much else besides. A third component is continuous comparison, and almost constant oscillation from present to future to past and back, heedful of prospective change, concerned to expedite, limit, guide, counter or accept it as the fruits of such comparison suggest."

### European and U.S. Histories of Conflict

European history has been dominated by recurring armed conflict. As Michael Howard outlines in War in European History, the modalities of fighting have evolved just as the causes for war have. What has consistently happened is that an evolving European society has regularly derived new reasons for war. Times of peace are normally the result of fatigue from fighting, a balance of power equilibrium, temporary political understandings, preoccupation with other issues, or a

societal/military condition that generally discourages war.  
But times always change and the transitions often bring war.  
So, the first historical time stream issue is a broad one.  
Has this pattern of repeating periods of war truly ended?

A second major theme is the linkage between European and U.S. conflict history. Except for the Civil War and continental wars of hegemony, all U.S. wars have been fought with European powers or against what we perceived as an ideological threat who's heart and mind resided in Europe. The following table provides a summary:

MAJOR WARS	EUROPEAN ANTAGONIST?
Revolution	yes
1812	yes
Mexican	no
Civil	no
Spanish-American	yes
WW I	yes
WW II	yes
Korea	no, but...
Viet Nam	no. but...
NATO era	yes

} wars of containment

Although the past 45 years have been peaceful in Europe, there has been a state of pseudo-war; with large armies postured facing each other across the FLOT of an Iron Curtain. This "war" had a 1-14 day fuse and it drove expensive weapon system and force structure requirements for both sides. Forces were essentially pre-mobilized in forward defense positions. Strategies and tactics were clearly defined; the threats itemized in detail. U.S. forces were at the heart of this stand-off. U.S. fighting men have now been in Europe most of the 20th Century.

Further, every time since the start of this century, the U.S. has been drawn into European wars. The point to be made here is that historically the links between U.S. and European war histories are strong and getting stronger. Unless this part of the time stream changes course, the U.S. should expect to get involved in future European wars.

It would be easy at this point to conclude that, given European proclivity to fight on a regular basis and the history of U.S. involvement, the U.S. will eventually be required to fight again in Europe. Given this perspective, one could argue the recent Soviet political withdrawals in Eastern Europe and apparently reduced offensive posture simply mean a "return to history". Lifting the lid of Soviet domination and a resultant decline in a bi-polar balance of power will allow ancient trends of war to recur. Historical animosities, border disputes, nationalism, ethnic boundaries that cross state borders, economic jealousies, minority dissatisfaction, and multiple independent states offer a field ripe to breed European war.

But simply saying the future will replay the past is too shallow an argument. The other side of this perspective cites the historical precedent that democracies don't fight each other- and the most dramatic of all recent changes in Europe has been the rise of democracy. Further, Europe has been at peace for 45 years, not because of the pseudo-war described earlier but because war simply didn't make sense. There was nothing to be gained by war. War had become too devastating and the concerns of nations had turned from territorial hegemony to

economic needs. Even ideology, some would argue, is no longer a rallying point for war.

#### CHANGES IN THE STREAM

We obviously haven't yet peeled back enough layers from this eternal onion. Neustadt and May told us a few pages back, "...that what matters for the future in the present is departures from the past, alterations, changes, which prospectively or actually divert familiar flows from accustomed channels..." This section will provide a top level review of the most significant changes in Europe that might affect the future. One problem of today's analysis has been the false impression that only the most recent (less than a year) changes are the operative ones that could divert the channel of war from European history. Instead, many changes occurring over the past 40 years may have just as much significant impact.

##### Less Recent Changes

Nuclear Weapons. These weapons have changed the nature of war itself and introduced new concepts of deterrence. They have helped make war unthinkable in Europe for 40 years. Yet, they haven't eliminated the use of force in the world. Instead, they have changed the rules. Absolute war against a society that has these weapons carries the risk of devastating retaliation. Nuclear weapons have virtually eliminated unrestricted war between nuclear superpowers, but their effect on wars of limited objectives is far less certain and



predictable. Further, nuclear weapons may have contributed to a significant change in European perspectives toward war and the military in general. As Howard points out:

"Moreover the preservation of peace for three decades resulted, as it had after the Napoleonic Wars, in the breeding of a generation uninterested in military affairs, skeptical of the military virtues, and regarding the armed forces with a mixture of suspicion, incomprehension, and contempt...The more politically conscious among them were more keenly aware of the inequities within their own political and social systems and those with which they were involved elsewhere in the world than they were of the dangers threatening them from the outside. For many of them, to play any part in defending those systems, especially if it involved participating or acquiescing in the use of weapons of mass destruction, was tantamount to becoming accomplices in perpetrating the injustice committed or tolerated by their governments."

U.S. Presence. The basing of a powerful non-European military force in Europe for over four decades has been a change of sorts. Asian and African powers have conquered and occupied parts of the region in the past. But the U.S. presence has been an invited one, to protect Western Europe from a threat in the East. It will be interesting to see if the European perspective will change regarding U.S. forces- from one of protector, to one of defacto occupier if the perceived threat continues to diminish. From a U.S. perspective, a presence in Europe has meant automatic involvement in any European war. When the purpose was containment of a hated ideology and the pretext of such a war was clear, this potential automatic involvement was easy to accept. With a broader range of prospective war scenarios (and enemies) this may become a more perplexing predicament. In the last two great European wars, the U.S. was able to sit on the sidelines and get involved when

it chose to. The current situation gives us no choice.

But, these preceding editorial comments aside, the U.S. military presence in Europe has been a stabilizing influence and the only credible counter to Soviet military power.

Soviet Military Power. The historic European superpowers of Germany, England, and France have been eclipsed by a nation unsure of and uneasy about using its new strength beyond the bounds of its ancient fighting grounds. Soviet military power remains awesome despite announced changes in doctrine and limited force reductions. But its foreign combat adventures in Afghanistan and attempts to export fighting surrogates have been disappointing. Further, four decades of force posturing in Europe yielded little, except an expensive buffer zone against an uncertain threat. The successful use of Russian military power has seemed to remain historically consistent- defense of the homeland and expansionism into adjacent, strategically significant, but limited territories. Perhaps the most important change, then, is Soviet strategic nuclear power. Nuclear weapons owned by the USSR remain their most valid claim to being a superpower. There is no evidence the Soviets intend to give up this status.

French and British Nuclear Weapons. These arsenals, often overlooked due to US-USSR dominance, are a significant factor in European theater war. Even if all U.S. nuclear weapons were withdrawn from Europe, these systems would offer a valid deterrent capability. To a degree, this provides a counterpoint to the assertion made earlier that these traditional European

superpowers have been eclipsed by the Soviets.

European Community. This is essentially a manifestation of growing European economic interdependence. While many have predicted the EC's demise due to old European mistrust, it hasn't happened yet. How the EC will affect future history remains in doubt. It could provide the forum for jealousies, distrust, and differences to ignite. But the EC, as well as the CSCE, are evidence of a common desire to cooperate instead of fight. These sorts of initiatives may be the spawning grounds for future alliances that include military as well as economic and political structures.

#### The Recent Changes

So much has happened in the last year it is hard to sort out what is historic only in a recent sense (and merely a recurrent theme of the past) from what has truly changed the course of history. Many of the recent changes could easily be returning Europe to older, more traditional pre-World WarII sources of conflict.

Failure of Communism. The apparent demise of this form of society is historic in a short term sense. Europe has witnessed the failure of previous ideologies and forms of rule- feudalism, monarchies, fascism. The failure of communism could be seen as another step in the evolution of how societies organize themselves, and not as the key to future peace in Europe.

The Rise of Democracies. It's been so wonderful to see democracy breaking out in Eastern Europe that we sometimes forget

how really hard it is to make this form of government work well. There will be a period of disillusionment following the euphoria of this year- as societies grasp the hard new economic realities and the imperfections of democracy and free markets. However, the rise of democracy is probably the most significant of all recent changes. Democracies don't have a history of fighting each other (But maybe that's been because there has always been someone else to fight). In any event, this change should be exploited to help avoid European return to history.

United Germany. A reunited Germany will mark the final end to World War II. This change, then, is only historic in recent terms. Most of the European fears of a reunited Germany are historically based- coupled with the new apprehension of Germany's economic might. One could argue the German warlike psyche of World War II has been changed by the failure of fascism and the humiliation of defeat and occupation. But will this be true of another generation further removed from the war? Will the Germans turn to resent 40 years of "occupation" by Soviet and NATO powers? A united Germany is a return to history. The conditions in which it lives and the difficult-to-predict mood of its people will decide the effect on peace or war. The mistake we could make now is to simply assume that a united Germany will guarantee European peace.

NATO/Warsaw Pact Changes. The Warsaw Pact has ceased to exist as an effective military alliance. NATO may soon follow- or at least change its nature to a more predominantly political alliance. These changes have created an awkward situation;

one alliance imploded and another still faced off against a dimming, one-nation threat. The unknown effect of this change is whether or not any military alliance structure will exist in the future. But Europeans are, after all, used to changing alliances- both in times of peace and war. The NATO and Warsaw Pact relationship has maintained the military peace through an era of political and ideological tumult. While their disappearance is satisfying to a degree, an alliance vacuum is a dangerous environment for the future.

Eastern European Independence. This is a heartwarming change of important significance. It represents the victory of the Containment Strategy. In terms of reducing the chance for NATO-Warsaw Pact conflict the change points to peace. But it also means there are more independently acting states that could be the sources of new reasons for European war.

Soviet Withdrawal. Overextended empires usually erode slowly over time or convulsively in war. The Soviet empire was overextended in Europe and the economic and political costs were simply too high. The Soviet turn to democracy and its withdrawal from Europe are positive signs. Its internal ethnic problems are far less comforting. The question is whether or not the momentum of empire reduction can be controlled. It's this unknown that is at the center of most contentions about the possibility of war in the near future.

Transnational Communications. This relatively recent change has allowed societies to learn what they're missing (politically and economically) and has expedited mobilization of public

opinion. Transnational communications could well be one of the most important factors in preserving the growth of democracies and free markets in Europe.

#### A Return to History?

In summary, it's interesting how many of the recent "historic" changes could also merely be repeats of past phenomena and conditions. These would include a changing alliance structure, social/political revolution, economic competition, independent and competing nations, ethnic rivalries, nationalism, and mistrust of powerful states. Already we see how many of these factors are contributing to alter Polish perspectives toward the USSR and Germany- Germany now feared for its power, perceived desires for Polish territory, and history of aggression. The lid of containment is off and we are beginning to see that this strategy not only restrained communism but also suppressed historic European cycles and sources of war.

#### What Changes Should Be a Part of Strategy

Too much has happened to predict a precise scenario for the future. Although our most distinct threat has diminished, there is still a sense that, left uncontrolled, the changes bear the seeds of conflict as well as hope. It is important therefore, to apply time-as-a-stream thinking to the application of historical analysis in support of strategic planning. We should identify which of the changes I discussed earlier offer the most important real changes in the stream of history- which ones can be exploited to continue the peace. I believe there are five key areas:

Nuclear weapons. The sheer terror of these weapons make them the most effective deterrent for war ever conceived.

U.S. Presence. Our involvement in European military affairs has helped bring peace to Europe for the last half of this century. We can continue to provide security for weaker European nations- especially in a period of transition. For instance, just as the U.S. has helped provide security for a nation like Norway in the past, an American commitment in Europe can help ease Polish concerns about Soviet and German power in the future.

Democracy. Democracy and the attendant free (or freer) market systems offer the most promising political hope for stability.

European Communities. Whether it's EC 92, CSCE, a Common European Home, or other avenues toward a Concert of Europe- these changes can establish a new way to avoid conflict by managing cooperation and interdependence. While there is economic risk to the U.S. (of being shut out by a huge, economically powerful conglomerate), the potential alternative of war is worse. Just as importantly, these initiatives can provide the framework for a new military alliance structure- or at least a forum for security cooperation and consultancy.

Transnational Communications. It may be naive, but it seems that people should get along better if they know each other better.

Future U.S. strategies toward Europe should capitalize on these changes. Our political strategy needs to focus on the support of democratic growth, economic cooperation, and improved

communications. U.S. military strategy should maintain a nuclear deterrence, a U.S. commitment to European security, and a new alliance structure.

#### THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HISTORY AND THE THREAT

From a U.S. strategic standpoint, the changes in Europe have confused us about how to compute the threat. The formula  $\text{Threat} = \text{Capabilities} + \text{Intentions} + \text{Vulnerabilities}$  provides a neat framework for analysis when you clearly know **who** the threat is; i.e., read  $\text{Soviet Threat} = \text{Numbers of divisions} + \text{desire to expand} + \text{relative weakness of our divisions}$ . The SECDEF and others are essentially arguing this formula is still valid because it is an addition problem. Therefore, since the USSR still has the capability, despite their apparently reduced intentions there is still a Soviet threat. The factor of Intention, although reduced has little impact on the required balance of forces.

Others contend the formula should be multiplied not added. If the Intention factor is 0, then the threat is 0. This formula might work with Britain or France, but doesn't seem correct for the Soviet Union. I would argue, then, that the formula for assessing the threat for a specific nation needs to depend on how certain we are about Intentions. In times of certainty (for friend or foe) the formula can be multiplied. In times of uncertainty about Intentions, it should be added.

There are two other impacts of today's uncertainty on threat



assessment. First, while maintaining a valid Soviet threat estimate, we need to develop strategies that consider war itself a threat. In Europe the formula  $T = C + I + V$  would read  $T \text{ (War)} = C \text{ (of potential warring nations and alliances)} + I \text{ (potential causes of conflict: disputes, instability, territorial desires, etc)} + V \text{ (balance of power between potential adversaries)}$ . The threat of war would come less from a distinct nation than from a general set of circumstances. This conceptual problem seems difficult to resolve because we have been lulled by 40 years of a comfortably distinct threat. But it is essentially the same fluid situation that has helped shape European statecraft, military alliances, and history for centuries. Threat assessment should flow between periods that can be clearly defined and quantified (during war or pseudo-war) and periods where uncertainty must broaden our perspective of the threat.

The second major impact of uncertainty on threat assessment is that in times like this we rely more on history to predict intentions. Since potential intentions are unknown, we seek the solace of precedent to predict the future. Historical analysis, properly identifying changes in the stream, can help provide insight on what could lead to war as well as what could prevent it. It is important, then, that any strategy pull elements from this phase of the threat assessment. For example, if we agree that nuclear weapons, democracy, U.S. presence, and communications can help reduce intentions for war- a strategy should exploit these opportunities.

## CHOICES

The changes we have seen in history's stream could lead to war or peace. There are trends that could return Europe to its cycle of war. But there are also changes that could be used to build a revised strategy to continue the peace. The U.S. has three broad courses of action to pick from.

First, we could walk away militarily from Europe, leaving security in European hands. Proponents of this choice would argue that if the threat (in a Soviet sense) is gone, there is little need for a U.S. military presence. Further, if the threat of war in general is gone due to democracy and a growing sense of community, there is even less need for a U.S. military strategy. The "walk-away" choice can even be argued from the other hand- that war in European history is not over. Therefore, the U.S. military should not be committed in Europe since that would mean almost automatic involvement in a war not particularly of our own choosing or interest.

The second choice is to maintain the current strategy, tactically modified to account for reduced force levels. This option would continue to provide a military cover protecting economic and political development and keep a hedge against a possible Soviet backlash.

The first option is cheap, the second expensive. The first is risky, the second won't sell in Congress much longer. There is a third option- essentially one that offers a transition from the second almost to the first. As you can guess, this

is the strategic course outlined in the rest of this paper.

## U.S. MILITARY STRATEGY RECOMMENDATIONS

There are several key assumptions within the strategic framework to any revised European strategy. First, our national interests will remain survival and economic prosperity. As we've seen, U.S. military history is closely linked to Europe, and a European war could seriously threaten U.S. security. Likewise, with the world's interdependent economy we are more vulnerable than ever to European economic conditions. Strategic objectives will be to ensure peace in Europe and a Europe generally friendly to the U.S. Our military objectives should be to deter war, and, if war does occur, to prevent it from escalating to a global scale. So far, there's little difference in these assumptions from the past. What's changed is the threat and the most significant impact of this change is to our military strategy.

Communism and its attendant alliance appear gone as a threat. But the possibility of war in Europe certainly is not. Further, the Soviet Union still remains a potentially dangerous but uncertain enemy. These are the three most important themes in today's threat in Europe. A revised military strategy needs to accept the recent changes and work to exploit incremental advantages.

The short term objectives of a military strategy should be to provide a counter to Soviet force capabilities during

a period of transition. This would protect against a rapid change in Soviet intentions and also provide a means to gracefully disengage force postures in Europe.

In the longer term, the strategy should be based on a less certain threat- aware of war's recurrent cycle in European history. In this regard, we need to accept uncertainty- that precise threats cannot always be predicted. Long term strategy, then, needs to posture force capabilities to deal with this uncertainty, allowing planners in the future to adjust the strategy to fit the threat at that time. The simplicity of the last 40 years, when we could straight line the threat, is over.

There are two phases to a recommended revised military strategy in Europe. The first, a time of balanced force reduction, is meant to protect a period of evolution to a new, more carefully selective U.S. commitment to European security. Phase I: Disengagement (1990-2000).

The Disengagement period should provide security in Europe through an unstable period of Soviet political renewal. Since the USSR will remain the most serious military threat in this period, capabilities need to be maintained to protect against a violent backlash to perestroika.

CFE or other balanced force reduction methods need to be used to ensure a sense of security and stability during this time. This does not mean that significant reductions should not be sought- just equitable ones. NATO should remain as the primary alliance structure during this phase because it's already

there and a formal security arrangement will be needed to ensure stability. However, NATO can take on more political emphasis as tensions hopefully continue to abate. The strategies of Flexible Response and Forward Defense can be maintained since these plans are already in effect. In other words, the Disengagement phase simply seeks incremental adjustments in uncertain times while maintaining the successful elements of an existing strategy.

#### Phase II: Flexible Deterrence (2000+).

The next phase needs to focus on flexible deterrence; a strategy that accounts for the uncertainty of a future threat. The characteristics of this revised strategy follow:

A broader view of the threat. The Soviets may not be the likely enemy, let alone the only likely enemy. Other regions of the world, Germany, or an alliance of new economic powers (Germany and Japan?) may be the threats to peace.

An ability to choose when, where, and if to get U.S. forces involved. While a U.S. presence in Europe may be of deterrent value, the basing and posturing should be such as to avoid automatic commitment in any European conflict. Don't base in harm's way.

Responsiveness. The reduced numbers of U.S. forces in Europe will mean we must have the capability to get there quickly if needed. Although improved warning times will help, the political response timelines may negate this advantage.

Footholds. We need to keep safe entry points and storage locations in Europe. Britain probably remains the best choice

for this.

Special Relationships. We need to maintain special bilateral ties with certain historic allies in addition to any future alliance structure. These relationships could involve intelligence cooperation, prepositioning arrangements, nuclear weapon cooperation, and basing rights. The important thing here is we should not feel obligated to deal only with a monolithic Europe.

Ability to see new threats as soon as possible. This may seem self-evident but it should drive intelligence capabilities and requirements.

A nuclear top-cover. Nuclear weapons should continue to deter large scale war in Europe. In addition, they can be used to deter war between Europe and other regional powers and emerging nuclear states.

A new alliance structure. A new Europe, less fractured by bi-polar ideologies, but still vulnerable to economic, ethnic, and border conflicts needs a new military and political alliance format. The goals of this alliance should be to deter internal European war and provide for the defense of European interests from the outside. Internally, the alliance would perform peacekeeping and police style missions. Externally, the alliance would protect against potential aggression and secure key economic interests, such as oil trade routes. Most importantly, the alliance would focus military interests on European concerns and help diffuse internal sources of conflict.

The U.S. should be a part of this alliance. U.S. cultural,

economic, and historical ties with Europe are significant. We can help ensure our participation if we support an evolution from the current NATO/Warsaw Pact framework to a new one that includes all the old members from the previous blocks.

The military force elements to support this strategy need to have the following characteristics:

Ground forces. Large numbers of U.S. ground combat forces should not be maintained in Europe if the Soviet Union has politically stabilized and democratized. Emphasis should be on CONUS basing with regular joint deployment and training exercises (both in Europe and the U.S.) with European units.

Air and Naval forces. These forces provide the flexibility needed for future U.S. military units deployed in Europe. They can maintain a foothold in Europe without appearing to occupy territory. They can secure key air and sea LOCs. They can be quickly employed to delay hostile actions. But just as importantly, they can be selectively applied or **withdrawn**. Please note the implications meant in this deployment scheme. While ground forces would undoubtedly be the most important in any European engagement, by basing them in the U.S. we can avoid the costs of overseas stationing, reduce European sensitivities to our presence, and more carefully decide when (or whether) to engage in a European war.

Intelligence. The U.S. will need to revise its intelligence objectives and capabilities. While we will need to maintain classic military "bean counting" missions, national agencies must develop better political, economic, and social intelligence

capabilities. It is from these later categories that sources of conflict will arise. HUMINT resources must be expanded and the scope of Indications and Warning will need to be broadened to include a wider variety of potential adversaries and conflicts.

Nuclear Weapons. Most U.S. theater nuclear weapons should be removed from Europe. A limited number of air delivered systems can be retained to show commitment. French and British weapons should provide the bulk of the nuclear forces. The U.S. will have the capability to deliver nuclear weapons in Europe from CONUS based systems. In this regard, strategic bombers could still provide a valid nuclear deterrent well protected from preemptive strike, that could be selectively employed without the appearance of an all out attack.

Plans. Let's face it, we are reentering a time when Rainbow style plans are needed. Because the range of potential enemies and war scenarios is broadening, the U.S. will need to expand its contingency planning accordingly. More than anything else, these plans will foster forward thinking and provide the benchmark needed for force structure planning.

Forward Defense. The concept of Forward Defense was valid when containment was the objective and Warsaw Pact forces were deployed on NATO's eastern borders. Forward Defense should only be maintained through the Disengagement phase and abandoned if the Soviets have demonstrated true military and political change over the next several years. During this interim, as forces are removed and the IGB disappears, we need to be prepared



to trade space for time- something the Germans should be more willing to accept then.

Flexible Response. Remarkably, the basic ideas behind this strategy can remain but the context will be significantly different. From a U.S. standpoint, Flexible Deterrence should mean maintaining a commitment to European security by protecting Europe from major external threats and from convulsive, large scale inter-European conflict. It should also acknowledge the U.S. has no intention of being involved in just any European war. In other words, the flex in Flexible Response will significantly grow at the lower end of the spectrum to include an option of not even responding to a war within Europe. U.S. Flexible Deterrence in Europe should be aimed at selective involvement at appropriately scaled levels. In this regard, Flexible Deterrence accepts the historic tendencies of Europeans to fight and retains our option to get involved depending on the situation.

Force Structure. As I argued earlier, in times of uncertainty it is important to add (not multiply) the threat equation. While this reduces the effect of the Intention factor, it provides a prudent rationale to account for unknowns. Capability should remain the dominant factor in determining force requirements. U.S. force requirements should still largely be driven by Soviet capabilities but tempered by arms control agreements, asymmetries in effectiveness, and a realistic accounting of allied contributions. But what we can change due to less threatening intentions is the disposition of our

forces in peacetime. Most of what we now have forward based can be returned to the CONUS. This would offer an economical compromise to unilateral reductions while at the same time providing a security commitment to Europe. However, for CONUS based forces to maintain credibility we must retain the ability to deploy back to Europe within estimated warning and response times. This will require fast sea and air lift; lighter ground divisions; and fewer, smarter weapons.

In summary, these strategy recommendations are meant to provide a structured means to adjust incrementally in changing times. The Disengagement phase protects against a change in Soviet intentions just as it also protects against bad judgment on our part caused by the euphoria of victory in the Cold War. We were faced with a similar time following World War II when we didn't leave the field after the war was won but understood that military forces could help preserve stability in uncertain times. The Flexible Deterrence phase attempts to provide a vision of the future that builds on the optimism of the present but accounts for the recurring theme of war in human history.

## CONCLUSION

Is war in European history really over? I think not. The changes of the past year could likely return Europe to old patterns of recurring war. The specific sources of conflict do not have repeat those of the past- it is the pattern, not

the precise cause, that we need to protect against. Michael Howard concludes War In European History writing...

"One may feel some gratification that, after a thousand years of armed conflict within Europe, a society has developed which feels itself sufficiently secure to turn its back on the traditional military virtues; but this must be tempered by the apprehension that, in a world so heterogeneous and unpredictable as that in which we live, such confidence may prove premature. Nothing has occurred since 1945 to indicate that war, or the threat of it, could not still be an effective instrument of state policy. Against peoples who were not prepared to defend themselves it might be very effective indeed."

Despite the changes we have witnessed this past year, Howard's assessment still seems as valid as it was in 1976. Our challenge is to build a strategy that exploits the changes in history that might lead to continued peace. While there are significant political and economic aspects to such a strategy, the military contribution is no less important than it has been since the end of World War II. At the same time we need to protect U.S. self-interests by selectively picking and choosing what is worth fighting about. Our strategies for the future must account for this ambiguity, allowing the future itself to adjust as the threats become more evident. What we cannot do is simply walk away when the immediate threat dims.